



2006 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES CITY OF WILLIAMSBURG

Regional Priorities

* Jamestown 2007 Commemoration

The city encourages the General Assembly to continue to provide marketing funding for the Jamestown 2007 Commemoration and to include \$500,000 in its biennial budget to help create a Regional Welcome Center within Colonial Williamsburg's existing Visitor Center in advance of the Commemoration. Colonial Williamsburg's Visitor Center will serve as the primary welcome center providing statewide information, ticketing opportunities, and transportation services to regional attractions and museums.

* Virginia Tourism Funding

The city strongly urges the General Assembly to increase funding for the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) to promote tourism in Virginia generally, and in the Historic Triangle in particular. This will be the last chance for the General Assembly to step up VTC promotion to coincide with Jamestown 2007.

* Williamsburg Area Transport Transit Authority

The city supports legislation enabling the creation of a Williamsburg Area Transport Transit Authority to operate our region's transit system.

* College of William and Mary

The city supports the College of William and Mary's efforts to restructure its relationship with the Commonwealth through the development and approval of six year academic, financial and enrollment plans, particularly the very modest enrollment growth plan between now and 2012.

The city supports and strongly urges the Governor and the General Assembly to provide sufficient funds to purchase the Sentara Williamsburg Community Hospital site in the city for expansion of the College's School of Education and other graduate programs.

* Funding for Public Libraries

The city supports the Virginia Library Association's request to incrementally increase funding over the next three years to fully fund the state aid formula for public libraries across Virginia.

* Code Compliance for Weeds and Grasses

The City requests that Section 15.2-901 A 3 of the Virginia Code be amended to add Planning District 23 (Hampton Roads) as an area in which local governing bodies may by ordinance require the cutting of excessively high weeds and grass on occupied properties as is now authorized for unoccupied properties. This is presently the case for localities in Planning District 8 (Northern Virginia).

Statewide Priorities

* Transportation Funding

The city encourages the General Assembly to take up transportation funding as its highest unmet funding priority in 2006. The city supports increased transportation user-based taxes and fees to address critical transportation needs, especially in Hampton Roads.

* State Support for Standards of Quality and School Capital Projects

As recommended by the Williamsburg/James City County School Board, the city supports improved state funding for Standards of Quality requirements and specific funding for school capital improvement projects.

* Uniform Telecommunications Taxation

The city supports restructuring local telecommunications taxes to provide a uniform tax rate for all local exchanges, wireless services, and E-911 taxes. In order to ensure localities do not lose revenue on the process, the uniform tax rate should be set at 5%.

* Restrictions on Real Estate Tax Rates

The city opposes any legislation intended to restrict local taxing authority and revenues, whether by restricting assessment authority or tax rates, exempting portions of value increases, or other property tax limitations.

* State Taxation on Local Government Services

The city opposes the imposition of a state fee, tax, or surcharge on municipal water, sewer, or solid waste services.

* Eminent Domain for Redevelopment

The city strongly urges the General Assembly not to unduly restrict the ability of local governments to acquire property necessary to carry out local government functions, including redevelopment of blighted urban areas.

* Consistent Voter Registration; Determination of Domicile

In the absence of clear statutory guidelines, the City's Voter Registrar used guidelines published on the State Board of Elections web site in determining the domiciliary status of persons wishing to run for local public office and/or to vote in the City. Although uniformly applied by the Registrar, use of the suggested guidelines resulted in extensive litigation filed against the Registrar, both in federal and state courts. Among the issues raised by the plaintiffs was the lack of state-wide uniformity in the determination of domicile. The City requests that Virginia electoral statutes be amended to more precisely prescribe the factors to be considered by voter registrars state-wide in making their determinations of domicile.